



During 10 days in September, Heads of State and Government gathered at the UN HQ in New York for the opening of the 77th session of the **UN General Assembly (UNGA)** and ten days of the annual High Level General Debate. Summits, speeches and dialogue filled the days as police sirens, closed streets and occasional protests took over the surrounding area. This year the meeting was mostly held in person and took place against the somber background of three complex and interconnected global crises currently challenging traditional forms of diplomacy and calling for new forms of multilateral response: **Conflict, Climate Change and COVID 19**. At the same time, **Climate Week** in New York City highlighted the urgency of response to the climate crisis through a plethora of panels, activities and events. In this issue of News from the UN we highlight just a few of the sessions we attended. [Read more....](#)



[Preventing Famine and Fighting Food Insecurity](#)



Leading up to the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), the **Global Network Against Food Crises** and the **High Level Task Force on Famine Prevention** held a discussion around the topic of famine and food insecurity. The world is heading toward a significant food crisis as a result of the “Three Cs”: **conflict, climate change, and COVID-19**. Olof Skoog, the European Union (EU) Representative to the UN proposed a few solutions to the growing food crisis. First, there must be an increase in humanitarian food support. Second, there must be investments made in not only the agriculture sectors, but also healthcare and sanitation. Third, a holistic approach must be taken so that the root causes of food insecurity are addressed to prevent

future crises from occurring. Finally, he emphasized the importance of cooperation and connection between the UN, non-governmental organizations, and peace missions. Margot Vandervelden of the **World Food Program (WFP)** pleaded with the international community to scale up responses to food insecurity, heed early warning signs, and increase funding, particularly in states where ongoing conflict is the cause of food insecurity. She stressed that “*the impact of a war on food security is often just as deadly as the war itself.*” [Watch a short video](#) [Read more....](#)

Facts and figures, Did you know?

- **201-205 million** people globally are in the 3 highest phases of food insecurity.
- 2022 is the **4th year** in a row of increasing food insecurity issues.
- Inflation is causing the price of a food basket to rise as much as **88%** in Haiti, **139%** in Ethiopia, **405%** in Syria, and **696%** in Somalia.
- **52% of the people** suffering from severe food insecurity are from only **5 countries**: Afghanistan, Yemen, Ethiopia, The Democratic Republic of Congo, and Nigeria.



[Youth Solutions for Sustainable Food Systems](#)



During the same week of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) Debate, one of the Climate Week events held was the **Tzu Chi Holistic Climate Solutions Summit**. This was a week-long summit of various panels, workshops, and discussions around climate through a lens of collaboration and optimism. The panel on **Youth Solutions for Sustainable Food Systems** discussed the inequality found within global food systems and how there are many youth groups already finding solutions for this issue. The panelists found the best way to move forward was to start small, increase youth representation, and implement new climate education curricula as early as possible. Youth comprise 1.2 billion of the current 7.9 billion people on the planet, around 15% of the global population. The food system needs to change on a large scale. What we eat, how we eat, why we eat all need to be investigated to find new ways

to collaborate to make old fashioned food systems obsolete.

[Watch the short video clip](#) from **Tzu Chi** on this specific event.

Transforming Education Summit

The UN Secretary-General convened a 3 day summit on Transforming Education during the UNGA in September 2022 following what he identified as the largest disruption to education on record, triggered by the COVID-19 pandemic. With more than 90% of children affected and 244 million children still out of school, the pandemic's impact on access, inclusion, relevance and quality of education for millions of young people world wide has led to profound implications for current and future generations.. Consultation built on a recent



UNESCO report which identified the need for a “**new social contract**” for education.

Two Civil Society days were held with broad participation. One showcased youth-led mobilization and one focused on envisioning solutions. These days preceded the **High Level Leaders’ meeting** on 19th September in which member states spoke to the problems and shared solutions. The goal of the Summit was to recognize quality education as a global good to which all have a right and to take clear steps to reform education, incorporating peace education, climate education and digital education as key elements of an educational system that promotes peace, tolerance and sustainable development



➔ [Read more.....](#) ➔ Watch the [UNESCO video](#)
➔ Read the [Sec General’s Opening remarks](#)

Fossil Fuels

Fossil fuels are a major cause of human-induced climate change, accounting for more than 75% of global greenhouse gas emissions. Among the many events organized during UNGA 77 and New York Climate Week were several sessions that shone a spotlight on fossil fuels. Up until now, attention has focused on the **demand** for fossil fuels, and little data has been available about the **supply**. In a recent report, **UN Environment** highlighted the gap between where emissions are predicted to be in 2030 if current trends continue and where they need to be if we are to stay within the 1.5 degree temperature rise of the Paris Agreement. With the launch of the **Carbon Tracker Registry** during UNGA 77, a major step was taken towards greater transparency. The registry is the first-ever public database on emissions relating to fossil fuel production, use and reserves, providing details for 89 major producing countries. It is hoped that this open data source will provide a solid basis for international policymaking and a valuable tool to empower groups to hold their governments to account for the climate commitments they have made. These include the **Glasgow Declaration** which mentions the gradual phasing out of fossil fuel production and the transition to green energy.



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The Path to Cervical Cancer Elimination



In September the **Business Council for International Understanding (BCIU)** hosted an event highlighting the importance of cooperation and advocacy to vaccinate girls in developing countries against cervical cancer through the **human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine**. During the pandemic, the worldwide HPV vaccination rate fell to 13% and cervical cancer screenings fell to 50% because of lack of access to doctors. The panelists discussed how the current healthcare system leads to an inequitable access to vaccines. There is also a cultural barrier due to the societal apprehension to allow girls to be vaccinated. There is a misconception that if a girl seeks the HPV vaccine, it is because she wants to prevent a sexually transmitted disease (STD), but that is simply not the case. The HPV vaccine prevents cervical cancer, which kills a person every two minutes. People do not have to suffer from this—70% of eligible girls cannot access the HPV vaccine, which is why the panelists focused on promoting cooperation with community leaders, equitable access to healthcare and improving the healthcare system as a whole.

➔ Watch a short [video from WHO](#) \

➔ Watch tther related [WHO videos](#)

RSHM Briefs



At the beginning of September we were happy to welcome **Emma Schaefer** for a three month internship with our **RSHM NGO**. Emma is in her Junior year at **Marymount Manhattan College**. She is majoring in Politics and Human Rights + International Studies. We warmly welcome Emma!

September marked the **Season of Creation**, and **RSHM** celebrated it various ways around the world with special attention to this year’s theme “**Listen to the Voice of Creation**”. Ecumenical and inter-faith events formed an important part of the programme of Climate Week in New York.

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On the **Eastern American Area Missioning Day** **Veronica Brand RSHM** gave a presentation on Climate Change and its impacts and global advocacy efforts. Sisters were invited to explore our RSHM response in the context of Pope Francis’ call in Laudato Si.

Distribution

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